



## **APPROVED MINUTES**

### **MINUTES OF THE EDUCATION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING Fort Lauderdale, Florida**

**100 North Andrews Avenue, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor – Cafeteria  
May 15, 2008 – 6:30 p.m.**

**Administrative Note:** Minutes Approved August 21, 2008

**April 2008 – March 2009  
Cumulative Attendance**

<b>Members</b>	<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>
1. Dr. Elizabeth Hays, Chair	P	2	0
2. Phaedra Xanthos	A	1	1
3. Laura Clark	P	1	1
4. Klaron Grigsby	P	1	1
5. Lu Deaner	P	2	0
6. Kaola King	A	0	2
7. Dr. Leola McCoy	A	0	2
8. Elaine Schulze	P	1	1
9. Niara Sudarkasa	A	1	1
10. Maureen Witting	P	1	1
11. Connie Christensen (arr. 7:13)	P	2	0
12. Gilbert Borrero (arr. 7:29)	P	2	0

Total Members Present: 8

Current Membership: 12; Quorum: 8

#### **Others Present**

Betty Shelley, Fort Lauderdale Council of Civic Associations

Charmaine Eccles, Staff Liaison

Brigitte Chiappetta, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc.

#### **A. Opening – Dr. Hays**

- **Attendance and Sign-In**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Hays at 6:35 p.m. The attendance sign-in sheet was passed around. It was determined a quorum was not yet present.

- **Approve Minutes and Agenda**

As there was no quorum, minutes and agenda for February, March, and April could not yet be approved. Chair Hays asked if any members present had additions to the agenda.

- **Announcements**

The death of Ms. Kathleen Gosnell, who was a Broward County teacher and Primary Specialist for 30 years, in an accident, was noted. Two other persons were injured in the accident, which occurred on Mother's Day (May 11, 2008).

**B. Current Business**

Dr. Hays commended Liaison Eccles for compiling an Action Items List for the Board. Ms. Shelley similarly praised Liaison Eccles for sending articles of interest to the Board members.

Ms. Deaner drew the Board's attention to a recent article in the *Sun Sentinel* regarding the community group Citizens Concerned about our Children. Chair Hays assured the Board that this would be discussed during the meeting.

- **Goals and Objectives**

Chair Hays addressed what were considered the "Top Three" goals for the Board, as discussed during the April Board meeting. These goals were as follows, in order of priority:

- Mentoring (items 6, 7, and 8 on April meeting's list of goals) – includes developing a program to have academy technology students mentor high school students having trouble with technology; developing a program in which high school students mentored middle school children and middle school students mentored elementary children; and developing a special program in which former Sunland students currently at Arthur Ashe mentor students currently at Sunland;
- Partnerships (item 3) – finds foundations and groups interested in sponsoring partnership programs; and
- One-on-One Reading Program (items 1 and 13) – developing a recommendation for Mayor, Commissioners, and City Staff (such as police officers and firefighters) to read one-on-one once a week with children in



school libraries, and help develop more partnerships between the City, City Employees, and City schools.

Chair Hays felt because it is May, these should be considered goals for the next school year (2008-09). She also mentioned that some members probably felt that the 2007-08 school year's goals should be continued.

Ms. Witting noted that many college students who may become teachers will be coming home for summer vacation and might be unable to find work; she believed they might be good participants in mentoring programs. Ms. Deaner suggested contacting Arthur Ashe to find out if there might be opportunities for this kind of program over the summer. Ms. Schulze felt that public libraries might present similar opportunities for mentoring. Ms. Clark recommended calling school guidance offices to let them know that chances like these might be available for high school students as well as college students. Ms. Witting raised the possibility of working with Parks and Recreation and letting them know mentors were available; Ms. Clark felt that the YMCA offered opportunities for mentoring as well, and offered to call the Boys' and Girls' Club and YMCA to establish a connection with this goal in mind.

Ms. Schulze remarked that many community organizations provide mentoring services, and the Board could assist them by providing places in which mentors and children could connect. Chair Hays noted that summer mentoring programs are restricted in the kinds of contact volunteers are allowed to have with students they are mentoring during vacation time (for example, contact is limited to email or telephone). Ms. Clark pointed out that while fingerprinting is the norm for persons working with students, passing a background check was an acceptable substitute, which might encourage more interested persons to volunteer as mentors.

Chair Hays urged any Board members who might have leads on these opportunities to provide Liaison Eccles with the information to include on her Action Items List, so they could be discussed in the future. Ms. Clark mentioned a former program in which City employees, such as police officers or firefighters, came on their own time to read to children, and the children enjoyed this program very much. Chair Hays said such a program might need a coordinator to solicit volunteers from City staff. She also noted that the Mayor or City Managers could provide important leadership by encouraging such a program, and Ms. Witting said that the Mayor could set an important example by participation.



- **Citizens Concerned about our Children**

Chair Hays explained to the Board that the CCC's existence arose from settlement of a lawsuit some years ago regarding inequities between schools located in the East and West sides of the City. As a consequence of the settlement, Broward County Schools were expected to take certain steps toward resolving these issues, including development of a Diversity Committee to help ensure equality among schools, particularly in regard to allocation of resources.

The *Sun Sentinel* newspaper had recently published an article citing some Diversity Committee members as saying they felt their efforts were "stonewalled" by County and School Board staff. The article also claimed Committee members felt few or no improvements had been made following the settlement. Chair Hays confirmed that inequities still existed between schools, as well as segregation and "starbursting." It was agreed that equipment, technological and otherwise, found in some of the "nicer" schools was indeed missing from others.

Ms. Schulze suggested a return to "shadowing," in which a Board member, or a Diversity Committee member, would follow a student throughout his or her school day and report back on what had been witnessed. Ms. Shelley pointed out that at times the person shadowing a student had been denied access to the school, and Ms. Deaner voiced the opinion that perhaps this was not the most appropriate way to gather information, although Ms. Schulze maintained that Board members had done this in the past.

Ms. Deaner noted that the new Superintendent of Schools, Jim Notter, was aware of these issues, and recommended the Board inform him that the Diversity Committee was perhaps, at this point, "nonfunctional." She also raised the fact that at least one school was considering a new lawsuit against the Board of Education with regard to the continuing inequities.

Ms. Deaner suggested contacting Mary Fertig, a former EAB member who had been active in the Diversity Committee, and inviting her to give a presentation on this topic to the Board, as she is more aware of the problems facing the Committee. Chair Hays proposed asking Ms. Fertig to speak to the Board at its August meeting, as she was uncertain as yet of the agenda for the June meeting.

Chair Hays referred again to the *Sentinel* article, which claimed the Diversity Committee wanted to divide itself into two groups, one to oversee the issues specifically included in the settlement and another to specifically address educational issues only. She felt that a separated Committee would be able to study all pertinent issues more closely, and

proposed that the EAB send a letter to Superintendent Notter in support of this division. Chair Hays felt the letter should also note that the consensus of EAB members present at the May meeting was that minimal progress had been achieved by the Diversity Committee thus far. It was agreed that an excerpt of this meeting's minutes would be requested with this letter in mind.

- **Best Practices Showcase**

Chair Hays attended this function on May 14, 2008, which included representatives from several cities who discussed successful practices they had put into place. The goal was to present a single Best Practice from each participating city. The programs displayed included (with appropriate City, if noted);

- A driving safety program, which gave students with safe driving records special cords to wear at graduation ceremonies. (Coral Springs)
- Mayor funding school activities. (Hallandale)
- Internet safety programs. (Cooper City)
- Anti-bullying initiatives. (Parkland)
- A "school resource guide" listing all public and private schools and pertinent information about them, made available to Realtors and Chambers of Commerce; Principals' Breakfasts Principals' Interviews; Backpack giveaways; Wine and cheese receptions; New teachers' retention programs. (Hollywood)
- Including one EAB member for each school in the District, to spend time in his or her particular school and advocate on its behalf at Board meetings. (Sunrise)
- Tutorial programs; Job information exchange between Montana and Florida. (Plantation)
- Plans for a new school. (Stranahan)

Fort Lauderdale did not present a display due to time and other constraints. Chair Hays proposed that if such an opportunity arose again, perhaps the Magnet Program at Arthur Ashe would be a possibility; she also reminded the Board that some students at Arthur Ashe received computers at their commencement ceremony, which was an initiative started by this EAB.

### **C. Old/Ongoing Business**

#### **1. Sunland Park – Update**

Chair Hays noted that there was no update on Sunland Park.



**2. Arthur Ashe – Update**

Chair Hays observed that in addition to its Magnet Program and commencement ceremony, Arthur Ashe was one of three Florida schools receiving an award from the National Teachers' Union. This award gave a \$1,000 grant to schools struggling to buy books for their libraries. She announced that Arthur Ashe was the only Broward County school to receive this award.

**3. Parent Association – Update**

Chair Hays noted that as yet, no one has taken charge of the initiative to develop a Parent Association.

**4. Other Reports/Updates/Discussion**

**a. Education Forum/Subcommittee Updates**

Chair Hays said all Board members had received the final report from the Community Involvement Committee. She did not know if there was a final report available yet from the Parental Involvement Committee. Mr. Borrero reported that meetings of that particular subcommittee had been postponed. Chair Hays proposed inviting representatives to a future meeting to update the Board on the Committee's progress during the past year.

**b. Steering Committee Meeting Minutes**

Chair Hays said she is still trying to procure the minutes from the Steering Committee. It was also suggested that, as Mary Fertig is also a member of the Steering Committee, perhaps she could combine an update of that Committee's progress with the CCC presentation the Board plans to ask her to give at its August meeting.

**c. Student Advisory Member to the EAB**

Although the Teen Advisory Board, with which Chair Hays wanted to follow up regarding potential members, will not meet again before the fall, she reported that a policy exists requiring that all EAB members be at least 18 years old, which might affect the status of the Board's Student Member. Chair Hays said she was informed of this policy via email. She noted that the City Commission charged with approving members allowed some flexibility in this policy, however. She planned to contact John Quinton, who has mentored student members in the past.



Although it was pointed out that a high school senior might be 18 and therefore eligible, Mr. Borrero recommended that the Board consider an underclassman instead, as seniors already have many responsibilities during their final year. Chair Hays added that an underclassman would have more of an interest in representing the students' point of view than a graduating student as well. Ms. Deaner noted that this presents a good justification for appointing a student under 18. Ms. Schulze suggested that with the age rule in mind, a liaison position might be more appropriate than a membership. Ms. Witting and Ms. Schulze agreed that the EAB was an excellent way for a student to achieve service credits, as well as a significant addition to a student's resume.

**d. City Commission/Manager Follow-Up**

Liaison Eccles said she had invited the City Manager to attend a future meeting and was waiting for a response. Ms. Deaner asked what, if the City Manager attends, the EAB would like him to focus on in particular to the Board. It was agreed that "what can the EAB do?" was an appropriate topic to ask the City Manager to address.

**e. Reports and Updates**

**Council of Fort Lauderdale Civic Associations – B. Shelley**

Ms. Shelley reported that Chief Roberts was scheduled to attend the Council's recent meeting, but was unable to come due to union negotiations that might prevent him from answering some sensitive questions. Instead, Legislators Ellen Bognadoff and Jack Seiler attended and spoke from both political parties' perspectives regarding several issues. On education in particular, it was pointed out by Ms. Bognadoff that only a two percent cut will be enacted by the Legislature, not intended to affect teachers' salaries, textbook costs, or facilities. Mr. Seiler, in contrast, however, felt that any cut affecting the school system could not be a positive move and next year would be even worse than this year. Ms. Shelley felt it was interesting to hear both points of view during the meeting. She also noted that Mr. Seiler is a current mayoral candidate.

Ms. Shelley told the Board that a date has been set for the CVC, but it was not considered a permanent date. In response to a question from Ms. Schulze regarding the amount of lottery funds going toward education, Ms. Shelley said the two speakers did not discuss the lottery at all. Ms. Clark noted that this is a complicated issue, as lottery money going toward education meant those funds would be taken away from other areas. Some discussion on Becon Productions expenses arose. Ms. Deaner pointed out that this program was originally developed as a community supplement to highlight the strengths of particular schools, and if these programs were recorded for each school, the resulting tape could replace a speaker if the funds for a speaker were not available.



She compared Becon funds to supplies funds, which were allocated for any given year with the understanding that if they were not spent, the funds would probably be cut the following year. Ms. Clark, however, noted a recent Becon program she had seen in which the production credits seemed like an example of wasteful spending. Ms. Grigsby, who is on the steering committee that oversees Becon, said she will try to clarify any questions regarding Becon's expenses and how budget cuts may or may not affect them as non-necessities at a future meeting.

Ms. Grigsby said the Florida School Counselors' Association meets during the summer, and provided copies of this organization's Legislative News for interested Board members. Among other information included, she said every school must now have and enforce a bullying policy; the Newsletter included information on the Stand Up for All Students Act, which prohibits harassment of any student or employee on school property, buses, or in cyberspace. Ms. Grigsby said this information is also available online. It was agreed that Liaison Eccles would send an electronic link to the Board members.

On a separate note, Ms. Grigsby also informed the Board that she will be offering a seminar on "The Power of the Mind." The seminar will address issues such as biofeedback and "mind over matter," and is intended to teach students that the most important powers one can possess lie within the mind. She said the seminar will take place on May 28, 2008, at 5 p.m. and that the program will be open to high school juniors and seniors as well as their parents.

At this time Chair Hays noted that a quorum of Board members was now present, and asked that they revisit and approve the minutes for February, March, and April.

**Motion** made by Ms. Schulze, seconded by Ms. Christensen, that the minutes of the February, March, and April meetings be approved. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

**Motion** made by Ms. Deaner, seconded by Ms. Schulze, that the agendas for March, April, and May be approved. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Chair Hays then presented her report, which she had tabled during approval of the minutes and agendas.

## **5. Chair Report**

Chair Hays drew the Board's attention to some recent awards given to City schools: William Dandy Middle School was one of only two Florida schools, and only 11 schools



nationwide, to win the National Excellence in Urban Education Award, from the National Center for Urban School transformation. They received \$1,000, and a banner recognizing their achievement.

Another award went to the Dillard Center for the Arts Jazz Band, which took top honors at the Savannah Music Festival. They received a \$2,500 cash award.

Chair Hays also recognized an excellence award given to Stranahan, for which she had noted a banner in the school's auditorium.

Chair Hays then noted the place of Fort Lauderdale's schools in a recent listing of graduation rates, pointing out that Dillard and Hallandale both fell near the bottom of the ranking. She addressed the West-to-East disparity that the Board had touched on earlier during the discussion of the Diversity Committee and CCC. Ms. Schulze emphasized that the Board had never received a formal definition of the term "dropout," and explained that currently all 50 states have individual definitions of the term. Chair Hays agreed that this might be a topic the Board needed to pursue in the future.

Chair Hays then read from a letter by Mr. Webster, which asked if the Board would like to invite Dr. Belsito (of the Old Dillard Community School) as a guest to an upcoming meeting. The Board agreed that as she had recently appeared as a guest, they would wait before asking her to come back to the Board again so soon.

Liaison Eccles provided the Board with the official date of the Fort Lauderdale Centennial in preparation for any potential school activities or celebrations. The Centennial will be March 27, 2011. Chair Hays stated that there had been some ideas for activities and sponsors suggested for awards and asked that the Board keep these in mind in the future.

#### **D. New/Future Business**

##### **1. Leavey Award**

Connie Christensen called the Board's attention to a brochure for the Leavey Award, which is a \$15,000 award that has never been won by a Broward County teacher. The deadline for application for this Award is October 1, 2008. The Leavey Award goes to educators teaching programs related to free enterprise. Ms. Christensen noted that the award is given by the Freedoms Foundation, whose largest national chapter is in Broward County. Chair Hays called for ideas on how to pass information on this award out to the schools. Ms. Christensen agreed to put together an email containing basic information about the award and send it to Liaison Eccles, who would then send to Mr.

Webster and to Broward County schools in general. It was also suggested that the local chapter of the Freedoms Foundation might sponsor a teacher interested in applying to one of the graduate programs. Ms. Harriet Kay, who founded the Broward County chapter, left a \$4 million endowment to the chapter in her estate which might provide funds toward such a sponsorship.

The Board also discussed the application process for students interested in applying to the Foundation's School of Patriotism. Students can apply in January 2009 and are interviewed by members of the local chapter, which covers students' travel and expenses. This program is for high school juniors. Ms. Grigsby said she will help get brochures on this program out to every school.

## **2. Next Meeting and Closing**

Chair Hays called for further contributions to Good of the Community news. There being none, she reminded the Board of the next meeting at the Old Dillard Museum and adjourned the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

[Minutes prepared by K. McGuire, Prototype, Inc.]